| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Date:** | August 21, 2018 | **MEPD and Texas Works Bulletin 18-6** |

**To:** Eligibility Services – Regional Directors
Program Managers
Eligibility Services Supervisors
Regional Attorneys
Hearings Officers

**From:** Gina Carter, Director
Policy Strategy, Analysis, and Development
State Office 2115

**Subject:** The Work Number Pilot (Only for Regions 1 and 11)

Bulletins are sent to supervisors and other regional managers. Supervisors must share this information with all eligibility staff. Please ensure that copies are provided to staff that do not have access to e-mail. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures.

Active bulletins are posted on the following websites:

- Texas Works Handbook (TWH) at http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/texas-works-handbook/texas-works-bulletins;

- Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities Handbook (MEPDH) at http://hhs.texas.gov/laws-regulations/handbooks/medicaid-elderly-and-people-disabilities-handbook/mepd-policy-bulletins.

**The Work Number Pilot (Only for Regions 1 and 11)**

**Background**

The Work Number (TWN) is an electronic data source used to verify employment and income through Data Broker to determine eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities (MEPD) programs.

As part of a cost-savings initiative, HHSC will run a pilot to assess the usefulness of TWN due to the anticipated increase in cost to use TWN for employment and income verification.

**Note:** Outstationed Worker Program (OWP) and MEPD-only staff and all other regions are not included in this pilot and will still have access to TWN in Data Broker.

**Current Policy**

*All Programs*

Staff must:
- Verify an individual's income and employment to determine eligibility for all programs according to:
  - TWH, A-1370, Verification Requirements;
  - MEPD, E-1200, General Income; and
  - MEPD, E-1310, Relationship of Income to Resources.
- Use applicable verification sources as required in:
  - TWH, A-1371, Verification Sources; and
  - MEPD, Appendix XVI.

When staff run Data Broker reports, all applicable electronic data sources containing data on the individual appear, including income and employment verification. If an employer reports directly to TWN, the following payroll information is provided and used as verification:
- Employer's information;
- Employee's date of hire;
- "No longer employed" or "Current as of" with a date;
- Employee's gross and net wages; and
- Pay dates.

If an individual's income and employment verification is not available via Data Broker, staff must utilize First Contact Resolution as outlined in the Eligibility Operations Procedures Manual (EOPM) and attempt to obtain verification utilizing an alternative source or method.

When the verification cannot be obtained, staff must pend and send Form H1020, Request for Information or Action, to request the missing income and employment verification from the individual.

**New Policy**

*All Programs*

There are no changes to the current policies as stated in the **Current Policy** section; however, TWN will not be available in Data Broker or Data Broker Standalone for the month of September 2018 for Texas Works (TW) staff located in Regions 1 and 11.

In addition, the Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System (TIERS) will not provide TWN when displaying Electronic Data Sources (ELDS).

Staff must continue to utilize First Contact Resolution Business Process Redesign (BPR) principles and attempt to obtain verification using other acceptable verification sources as stated in Texas Works Handbook A-1371, Verification Sources, and MEPD, Appendix XVI.

In addition, staff must continue to pend for the required verification and send Form H1020, Request for Information or Action, when verification cannot be obtained.

Completion rates will be monitored due to staff not having access to TWN. Results will be evaluated and adjustments may be made to staff performance measures depending on any impacts from the month-long pilot.

Region 1 and 11 staff **must not** seek TWN information from staff in other regions during the pilot period.

**Automation**

No automation changes are needed.

**Effective Date**

The TWN pilot is effective September 1, 2018 and ends September 30, 2018.

**Handbook**

No handbook updates are required.

**Training**

Training is not required.